

MONTANA CROP PROGRESS



United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
MONTANA FIELD OFFICE
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 Cooperating with the Montana Department of Agriculture



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CROP PROGRESS AND CONDITION MONTH OF MARCH 2022

AGRICULTURAL SUMMARY: Montana received minimal moisture during the month of March, according to the Mountain Regional Field Office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA. Counties along the western border received 1 to 4 inches of moisture for the month. The majority of the state remained exceptionally dry, with precipitation totals less than half an inch for the month. Precipitation totals for the year are 2.0 inches below normal. Temperatures for the month were mild. Average daily temperatures ranged from 1 degree below to 2 degrees above average for this time of year. According to the United States Drought Monitor for March 24, 2022, zero percent of the state is experiencing exceptional drought conditions. The amount of land rated as abnormally dry was 2.0 percent, a slight decrease from 3.0 percent at the end of February. Moderate drought was present across 2.9 percent of the state, compared to 3.0 percent at the end of February. Severe drought decreased from 37.0 percent at the end of February to 30.0 percent of the state. Extreme drought conditions are present across 52.5 percent of the state. Overall, 87.4 percent of the state continues to experience drought conditions, compared to 91.9 percent of the State at the end of February.

Reporters in Broadwater, Roosevelt, and Prairie counties reported exceptionally dry conditions with moisture desperately needed. Reports from Toole county were similar, with subsoil conditions reported as very poor in the county. Comments from Valley county indicated that although most snow has melted, there is very little water available and reservoirs and stock ponds in the county are dry. Due to the lack of grazing available, the outlook for livestock is poor. Phillips county reported dry reservoirs as well. Comments indicate producers may be forced to ship remaining cows out of the county due to poor conditions. If no moisture is received, farmers in the county are expected to plant just to cover the dry ground. Mineral, Missoula, and Ravalli counties reported an exceptionally dry month. Calving, however, is doing well due to the dry, warm conditions. Topsoil moisture levels were reported as 64 percent very short, 32 percent short, and 4 percent adequate, compared with 34 percent very short, 41 percent short, and 25 percent adequate on the previous report. Subsoil moisture levels were reported as 57 percent very short, 32 percent short, and 11 percent adequate, compared with 39 percent very short, 38 percent short, and 23 percent adequate. Snow cover was rated 1 percent excellent, 1 percent fair, 45 percent poor, and 53 percent very poor. Winter wheat was rated 14 percent very poor, 25 percent poor, 50 percent fair, and 11 percent good. Pasture and range conditions were rated 73 percent very poor compared with 52 percent very poor at the end of February.

Note: The first weekly report will be released on Monday, April 4, 2022.

CROP AND LIVESTOCK PROGRESS

Commodity	Current report (percent)	Previous report (percent)	Previous year (percent)	5-year average (percent)
Winter wheat				
Breaking dormancy.....	15	NA	18	NA
Cattle and calves				
Cows calved.....	35	5	35	NA
Receiving supplemental feed.....	97	95	86	NA
Sheep and lambs				
Ewes lambded.....	30	5	26	NA
Receiving supplemental feed.....	99	98	89	NA

NA – not available
 (--) – zero

SOIL MOISTURE CONDITION

	Current report (percent)	Previous report (percent)	Previous year (percent)	5-year average (percent)
Topsoil moisture				
Very short	64	34	30	NA
Short	32	41	46	NA
Adequate	4	25	23	NA
Surplus	--	--	1	NA
Subsoil moisture				
Very short	57	39	27	NA
Short	32	38	44	NA
Adequate	11	23	29	NA
Surplus	--	--	--	NA

NA – not available

(--) – zero

CROP, LIVESTOCK, PASTURE AND RANGE CONDITION

Commodity	Current report (percent)	Previous report (percent)	Previous year (percent)	5-year average (percent)
Grazing accessibility				
Open	59	57	71	NA
Difficult	14	30	9	NA
Closed	27	13	20	NA
Pasture and range				
Very poor	73	52	28	NA
Poor	21	31	32	NA
Fair	5	15	31	NA
Good	1	2	7	NA
Excellent	--	--	2	NA
Winter wheat				
Very poor	14	23	6	NA
Poor	25	35	10	NA
Fair	50	21	30	NA
Good	11	21	48	NA
Excellent	--	--	6	NA
Winter wheat – wind damage				
None	61	64	53	NA
Light	28	20	21	NA
Moderate	9	12	18	NA
Heavy	2	4	8	NA
Winter wheat – freeze and drought damage				
None	61	76	65	NA
Light	30	16	17	NA
Moderate	8	7	15	NA
Heavy	1	1	3	NA
Winter wheat – protectiveness of snow cover				
Very poor	53	19	76	NA
Poor	45	67	17	NA
Fair	1	14	5	NA
Good	--	--	2	NA
Excellent	1	--	--	NA

NA – not available

(--) – zero